

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8011

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMZSBASSY SEOUL 2363

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 8213

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, TW

SUBJECT: SUSPENSION OF TAIWAN POLITICAL REVIEW

REF: TAIPEI 7921

1. ACCORDING TO THE DECEMBER 29 ENGLISH-LANGUAGE CHINA NEWS, THE TAIPEI MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION HAS ORDERED THE SUSPENSION OF TAIWAN POLITICAL REVIEW (TPR) FOR ONE YEAR BEGINNING DECEMBER 28, 1975. REPORTEDLY, AN ARTICLE IN THE DECEMBER ISSUE OF TPR (CARRIED IN EMBASSY'S SUMMARY OF THE MAGAZINE UNDER THE TITLE OF "INTERVIEWS WITH PIANIST FU TSUN AND PROFESSOR LIU) WAS DETERMINED TO BE IN VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 32 OF THE PUBLICATION LAW, WHICH PROHIBITS PUBLICATION OF ITEMS COMMITTING OR INSTIGATING OTHERS TO COMMIT SEDITION OR TREASON. SO FAR NO OTHER LOCAL NEWSPAPER HAS REPORTED THE SUSPENSION OF TPR.

2. THE ARTICLE IN QUESTION WAS WRITTEN BY CHIU CHUI-LIANG, A TAIWANESE PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA. IN THE ARTICLE, CHIU PURPORTS TO QUOTE PROFESSOR LIU, IDENTIFIED AS A MAINLANDER SCHOLAR FROM TAIWAN WHO AT PRESENT IS HEADING A RESEARCH PROJECT IN AUSTRALIA, AS SAY-
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ING THAT IF THE PEOPLE OF TAIWAN WANT TO MAKE THEMSELVES

MASTERS OF THE NATION, THERE ARE ONLY TWO POSSIBLE ROADS TO FOLLOW: THE FIRST IS THAT THE TAIWANESE PEOPLE OVERTHROW BY FORCE THE DICTATORIAL KMT REGIME; THE SECOND IS THAT THE PEOPLE OF TAIWAN UNITE IN STRUGGLE TO REUNITE PEACEFULLY AT AN EARLY TIME WITH THE MOTHERLAND.

3. COMMENT: THE DECEMBER ISSUE OF TPR WAS AS A WHOLE MORE OUTSPOKEN ABOUT WHAT ARE CONSIDERED HERE TO BE SENSITIVE ISSUES THAN THE OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER ISSUES. NONETHELESS, IN THE EMBASSY'S VIEW, THE GROC, HAD IT CHOSEN TO DO SO, COULD HAVE SUSPENDED THE MAGAZINE UNDER THE PUBLICATION LAW AT ANY TIME SINCE THE MAGAZINE MADE ITS DEBUT IN AUGUST 1975 BECAUSE EACH ISSUE RAISED "SENSITIVE" ISSUES. THEREFORE, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE GROC'S DECISION TO SUSPEND TPR AT THIS TIME WAS MOST IMPORTANTLY A QUESTION OF TIMING: SUSPENSION OF THE MAGAZINE BEFORE THE DECEMBER 20 LEGISLATIVE YUAN ELECTIONS WOULD HAVE BECOME A CAMPAIGN ISSUE FOR THE INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES. WHILE SUSPENSION OF THE MAGAZINE AT THIS TIME WILL NOT GO UNNOTICED BY INDEPENDENTS, THEY NO LONGER HAVE A PLATFORM FROM WHICH TO ATTACK THIS MOVE BY THE GROC.

4. IT IS ALSO INTERESTING THAT THE ARTICLE CHOSEN TO BE THE "SCAPEGOAT" WAS WRITTEN BY SOMEONE WHO IS NOT ON TAIWAN AND AGAINST WHOM NO ACTION CAN PRESENTLY BE TAKEN. THIS MAY WELL HAVE BEEN A PURPOSEFUL DECISION BY THE GROC TO AVOID HAVING TO TAKE DIRECT ACTION AGAINST INDEPENDENTS IN TAIWAN ASSOCIATED WITH THE MAGAZINE. THE EMBASSY IS NOT AWARE OF ANY ACTION SO FAR TAKEN BY THE GROC AGAINST TPR BOARD MEMBERS OR OF ANY BY-PLAY INVOLVED IN THE SUSPENSION OF THE MAGAZINE AND WILL FOLLOW UP AS MORE INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE.
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